

## THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

NOTES ON THE SUNDAY SCHOOL  
LESSON FOR DECEMBER 28.

Lesson for December 28: Quarterly  
Review.

Golden Text.—Lord, thou hast  
been our dwelling place in all gener-  
ations.—Psa. 90:1.

A Lesson from Each Lesson.

1. Joshua Encouraged.—Joshua  
was encouraged when he had need,  
and because he had need. God never  
sets his servant to a great task with-  
out somehow giving him assurance  
that he can have help to perform it.  
The only condition is that the work-  
man shall bend all his own powers  
to the task. What is your great busi-  
ness? Your Jordan to be crossed?  
Your unknown path to be trodden?  
If you are about such business as  
God desires performed by you, no  
matter what it may be, be sure he is  
ready to say: "I will not fail thee,  
nor forsake thee."

2. Crossing the Jordan.—The Is-  
raelites kept their eyes on the ark.  
While it rested in the river's bed  
there was no danger of the descent  
of the pent-up waters of the upper  
stream. We need to keep ourselves  
in view of that greater symbol of  
God's presence with men, the cross.  
So long as we can see it we are in the  
right path, even though it leads  
through deep waters. They cannot  
overwhelm the cross. No flood can  
do that. No disaster or trouble in  
any human life is final and hopeless  
if the Christ who was slain has come  
into that life and imparted his own  
life to it.

3. The Fall of Jericho.—The vic-  
tory at Jericho was peculiar in its  
outward marks. It was won through  
faith and obedience. It was won on  
God's method, not man's. The out-  
come was plainly a divine victory.  
But are not all the victories of the  
soul like this? There must be faith  
and obedience, and life according to  
God's plan, and we must always re-  
member that the issue is God's. "Not  
unto us, O Lord!"

4. Joshua and Caleb.—In a divi-  
sion by lot each man is entitled to  
his proper share. Caleb, who is not  
of Hebrew blood, comes for his por-  
tion. He is one of the chosen people  
by a better credential than the blood-  
tie. He is such a man as God will  
honor. We owe more to our Calebs  
than we know. They are the ones who  
conquer the Hebrews of life. They  
win a stronghold, and a multitude of  
less determined folk find homes under  
their protection. For Canaans must  
be conquered, even after they are  
God-given. And leaders we must  
have. Be a Joshua or a Caleb if you  
can, but if not, then follow such  
men, humbly, faithfully, cheerfully.  
The world has need of private sol-  
diers, as well as generals.

5. Cities of Refuge.—God respects  
human life. He is not willing that it  
shall be lightly taken. But neither is  
he willing that the accidental slayer  
shall be punished as though his deed  
were deliberate. God, in these six  
refuge-cities, was saying that it is  
not the difference in deed, but the  
difference in motive, which sets the  
law-breaker off into a different class  
from the merely unfortunate. We  
are coming to learn the same thing  
in our human codes, but imperfectly.  
Not what you do, but what you really  
intended to do, is the thing that  
counts.

6. Joshua's Parting Advice.—The  
greatest reason for serving God is  
that it is right. There are rewards  
in his service, but they are not rea-  
sons. The apostle calls it "your rea-  
sonable service." There is hope for  
one who puts all promised gains into

the background, choosing to serve  
God because any other service is ut-  
terly and always wrong. It means  
singleness of purpose, freedom from  
sullied motives, the truest sort of in-  
dependence, and fellowship with  
God's greatest servant, his Only Be-  
gotten Son.

7. The Time of the Judges.—Un-  
faithfulness always suffers, not be-  
cause God is arbitrary, but because  
unfaithfulness is a cause of which  
suffering is an effect. Israel forsakes  
Jehovah, and the record says that  
God therefore forsakes Israel. But  
that is only one way of putting it.  
God could not have one attitude for  
the disobedient and the dutiful. That  
were to be a respecter of persons.  
But if the unfaithful will turn back  
to the God he has forsaken he will  
find that God is anxious to restore  
the old relationship and communion.  
He waits to be gracious.

8. World's Temperance Lesson.—  
The essential barbarism of intem-  
perance is one of its strangest marks.  
When you think connectedly about it  
it seems incredible that it should be  
a vice of civilized—to say nothing of  
Christianized peoples. That it is so  
is one of the proofs that civilization  
of itself is not a moral movement.  
Unless there is some great moral  
force to keep equal pace with civil-  
ization, the more civilization the  
worse. And the only sufficient moral  
and ethical force in the world is the  
gospel of the grace of God.

9. Gideon and the Three Hundred.  
—The world owes much to its minori-  
ties. Says the self-satisfied man:  
"But we are in the majority!"  
"Then," answers the philosopher,  
"look well to your cause. It must  
have something wrong about it."  
That is exaggeration, but it is a  
wiser attitude than a complacent re-  
lying on mere numbers. The really  
wise man finds out, not which is the  
stronger side according to the cen-  
sus, but which is the better side ac-  
cording to God's standard. Then  
he enlists, knowing not only that God  
is the stronger, but that his soldiers  
can always be unafraid.

10. Ruth and Naomi.—Ruth chose  
the better part. She chose with full  
understanding of the consequences.  
She chose to be rich in love and life,  
even though it meant poverty in al-  
most all else. She was led from love  
of Naomi to the service of Naomi's  
God. She chose for life. Her choice  
is a perfect pattern of what young  
people's life-choice should be, choos-  
ing the spiritual and eternal rather  
than the material and temporal.

11. The Boy Samuel.—Samuel had  
a wonderful, divine call. So had  
Isaiah. So had Saul of Tarsus. Few  
of us have such a vivid summons to  
surrender and service. Sometimes  
we are inclined to envy those whose  
conversion was so marked by the  
overwhelming power of God. But the  
vital thing in all these calls was not  
the outer phenomenon, but the an-  
swer that was made to the call. As  
Paul said afterward: "I was not dis-  
obedient to the heavenly vision."  
Everyone has a call of God inviting  
him to God's life. The circumstances  
vary, but the essential call never  
does. And the answer is the thing  
that counts.

12. Christmas Lesson.—The great  
lesson of the Christmas story is the  
lesson of God's grace. In all the ob-  
servances of the day it should be re-  
membered that Christmas is as inti-  
mately connected with the plan of  
salvation as is Easter. There is dan-  
ger of obscuring this thought in the  
general giving and receiving of gifts.  
God's gift of his Son was the fore-  
runner and glorifier of every other  
real gift made by God to man or by  
men to one another. So the Christ-  
mas time is eminently the appro-  
priate time for presenting the claims  
of God's grace on the hearts and lives  
of men.

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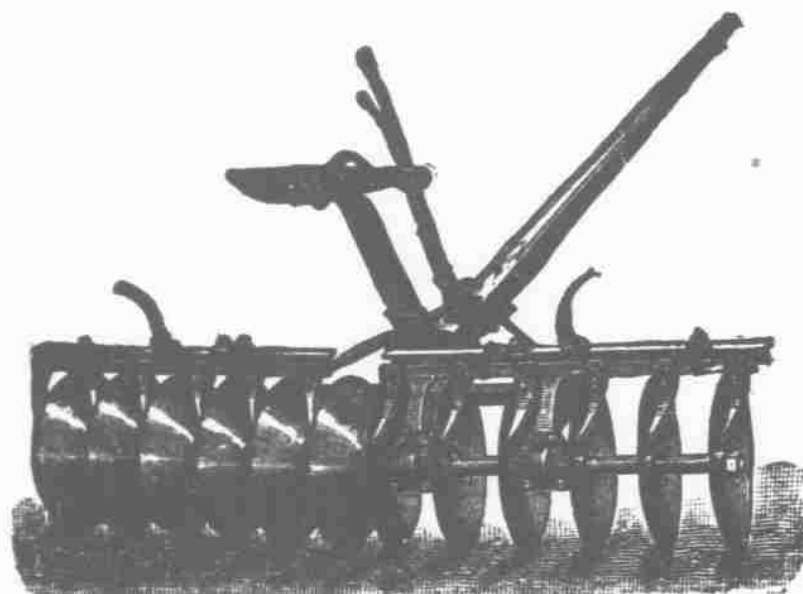
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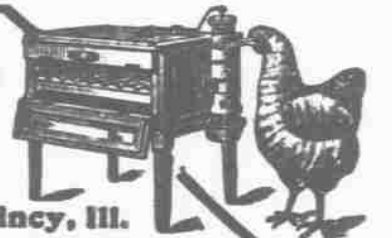
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